

Urban Nature Exchange #5

The **fifth Urban Nature Exchange** examined **how cities can better embed nature into spatial planning**. Cities highlighted common **challenges** such as **balancing rigid regulations with flexible strategies, securing funding and long-term maintenance**, and improving cross-sector coordination. Examples showed that **digital tools, clear ecological indicators, and strong collaboration help translate plans into real implementation**. Overall, the session stressed the need for better governance and practical tools to mainstream nature in urban planning.

Key Take-Aways

1

Barcelona's urban planning combines historic growth patterns with innovative strategies focused on sustainability and quality of life. The city integrates **metropolitan-scale regulations to ensure green infrastructure, sets clear ecological objectives** through strategic plans, and **preserves existing green spaces while promoting new urban greening initiatives**. Tools like **ecological indices**, though complex, **aim to quantify environmental quality** in neighborhoods.

Paris focuses on defining **clear standards** for urban development, **combining regulatory requirements with openness to negotiation** and **providing technical support** to designers, planners, and private operators. This resource-intensive model facilitates project improvement and alignment with city goals.

2

3

Belgrade has taken a major step forward in urban sustainability by adopting its first comprehensive **Green Infrastructure Strategy**, aiming to **coordinate all city regulations and projects to expand and protect green spaces**, despite ongoing challenges in implementation, funding, and biodiversity data. This marks a new era for Belgrade's commitment to healthier, nature-based urban development.

Mannheim strategically **integrates green infrastructure** into its urban planning **through initiatives** like **revising green corridors, setting climate adaptation goals**, developing a **biodiversity strategy, funding greening programs**, and using **citizen science**. The **UNP helps** align these efforts, **balancing state-level plans with community initiatives**, while addressing data integration challenges to enhance urban biodiversity.

4

5

Effective urban transformation requires not only strong planning and coordination across different levels of government, but also **ongoing collaboration and knowledge-sharing between cities**. Bridging the gap between ambitious plans and real-world implementation depends on robust **monitoring, support mechanisms**, and the collective **exchange of best practices and experiences**.